

JOURNAL
OF THE
BARBER COIN COLLECTORS SOCIETY

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1894-s Dime: The Classic Barber Rarity

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**JOURNAL OF THE
BARBER COIN COLLECTORS SOCIETY**

Published quarterly, and dedicated to bringing together a group of people with similar interests in Barber Coinage for the purpose of advancing appreciation of this series within the numismatic community.

Steve Epstein, Publisher - Barber Coin Collectors Journal

ON THE COVER:

THE MYSTERY OF THE CLASSIC BARBER RARITY

With only 24 originally minted, the 1894-s dime has for many years been considered one of the classic rarities in American Numismatics. But why such a tiny mintage for an official issue? It has been rumored that the very small mintage resulted because the Mint needed \$2.40 to balance its account at the end of the fiscal year. Another theory for the very small mintage was that these were assay coins. However, assay coins are destroyed once the required tests have been performed. Also, all were apparently made as proofs - quite unusual if they were assay coins and very unusual for a branch mint.

The final theory for the mintage of this rarity surrounds Superintendent of the San Francisco Mint Daggett. Mr. Daggett may have been asked by a banker friend to have a small number of "special coins" minted that could be given out to a small circle of close, mutual friends. Twenty-four were struck and divided equally, amongst a group of eight, with Daggett receiving his share of three. He turned his three over to his daughter Hallie and told her to save them until she was much older. Being a child at the time, she immediately spent one on a dish of ice cream. She sold the other two many years later.

Whatever the truth behind the small mintage, the fact that the coin was listed in the Mint Director's Report makes it probably the lowest official mintage of any U.S. coin ever. Every time it comes up at an auction, there is wide publicity and excitement.

This, your Publisher feels, is a fitting coin to represent the Society's first Journal for a series that, in itself, offers many fascinating stories.

(Information for this story was submitted by Donald Barsi, Fremont, CA)

Articles, Questions, Comments and Ads are welcome and should be forwarded to:

Publisher,
BCCS
P. O. Box 5353
Akron, OH 44313
U.S.A.

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WHY A BARBER COIN COLLECTORS SOCIETY?

Steve Epstein

Five years ago, I began collecting Barber coins. I started with dimes and halves in F-VF because one can actually complete a set of each at that grade level and not have to mortgage their house to do so. But not having a lot of money, I decided to take a number of years to build my collection. It was a lot of fun and challenge finding many of the dates in just the right grade. It was then I began to appreciate the true scarcity of Barbers. But it made it even more fun trying to find some of the dates. The thrill of the hunt was part of it, but another was how it helped to build the relationship with my son, who went to many of the local shows with me.

I enjoyed talking with most dealers, some of whom I found to be very helpful. But after a while, the information just ran out. And, frankly, so did my sources for many of the dates I was seeking. I wanted more information about true rarity levels of certain dates, and I wanted to find out more about Barber varieties, many of which sold for no premium whatsoever. I also wanted to meet more collectors who had the same interests in Barbers that I had. Finally, I wanted there to be more consistent grading standards for Barbers.

I knew there must be many other Barber collectors that felt the same way I did, so I decided it was time to do something about it and form a Barber Club. I was overjoyed that the articles in *Numismatic News* and *Coin World* brought well over 150 responses from fellow collectors who wanted to support a club. With that support in hand, I began working with some of the most prominent Barber specialists, who along with some of you, helped provide information for this premier edition.

I hope this newsletter gives you a good idea of the quality that I want future newsletters to have. With your support, we will be able to expand each newsletter into a full blown publication. You can help by joining the club now. Complete the membership application form on the back page and send it along with \$8 to the address enclosed. The \$8 is for 1989 dues and will (if we have enough members sign up) cover the cost for three more newsletters this year and the membership card that I will send you. Also, please take the time to complete the member feedback form on page 11 and send that along too, so that I know what the members want to see in the future. This will be OUR club and everyone will have a voice. Also, if you want to keep your first newsletter intact, you may copy the information on the back page and send that to me along with your check, rather than ripping the page out.

Finally, every club needs its bylaws or charter. I have listed those below that are a composite of the views of the many collectors who have sent me letters. I would like more feedback, and in the next newsletter will publish the final bylaws.

People said they want an organization that:

1. Promotes the writing and sharing of information on Barber coins to an organization of individuals who are interested in increasing their knowledge of the series;
2. Gives Barber hobbyists an opportunity to contact other collectors with similar numismatic interests;

3. Can promote consistent grading standards among people that sell Barber coins to its members;
4. Through group purchasing power, can offer its members discounts on Numismatic materials relating especially to the collecting of Barber coins;
5. Provides members a means to trade their Barbers with other members, in an effort to upgrade or complete their collection;
6. Effectively lobbies numismatic shows and events to provide Barber exhibits and space for all Barber dealers to sell their merchandise;
7. Promotes the collecting of Barbers and the hobby in general to today's youngsters;
8. Offers benefit to all Barber collectors, whether they collect Barber dimes, quarters, or halves, graded AG or MS65+;
9. Makes sure its members have a say in the organization;
10. Is a not-for profit organization dedicated solely to the benefit of its members.

I hope each of you share this newsletter with any family, friends, or local club members who also may be interested in joining the Society. If you want more copies of this newsletter for them, send me a note and please enclose an appropriate amount of money to cover the cost of postage.

Thank you again for all your support, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Steve Epstein
Publisher, BCCS Journal

BARBERS - AN OVERLOOKED SERIES

David Lawrence

When you think about it, it is a wonder that the three Barber series haven't drawn much attention before. Dating as they do between the readily available Mercury Dimes, Standing Quarters or Walking Halves and the Liberty Seated coinage, they have never suffered from lack of interest. Yet, no book has been written about them and few dealers make an effort to carry a decent stock in inventory.

So, it's not surprising that few collectors or dealers know much about the three Barber series. Ask your local dealer about such varieties as repunched mint marks (RPM's) or repunched dates (RPD's) or which are the underrated dates, and you will likely draw a blank. For every dealer who can tell you about the various mint mark positions in the early Barber Quarters, there is another who thinks the far right s in the 1897-s Quarter is a "mint error."

True, Barbers lack the variation of the Bust Halves. Die cracks and die clashes are not as common as in our earlier coinage and it is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish all the working dies. But don't say the series are dull. RPM's and RPD's exist in all three and mint mark positions can be distinguished in any date. Undoubtedly, many varieties have yet to be discovered.

The series include some coins that are very tough to get. Unless you have a lot of money and determination, it literally takes years to complete any of the three series in XF/AU condition. Even then, you most probably have to be willing to accept coins that have been at least somewhat cleaned or have a few nicks or scratches. A perfect set of originally toned (or dirty), trouble-free coins cannot be put together without extensive help from one or several national dealers — and a lot of luck.

At present, not having the aid of a society devoted to the coinage, we are pretty much in the dark when it comes to estimating the true scarcity of many Barbers. For one thing, it depends on the grade being discussed. Most Barbers are tough to find in intermediate grades from F+ to VF+, but some are scarce only at one end of the spectrum. For example, the 1894-p Half is tough to find in G or VG, but relatively speaking, available in XF or AU. The 1904-s Half is readily available in G or VG, but almost impossible to find in grades above fine.

Another quirk exists with the 1898-s, 1899-s, and 1900-s coins of all three series. Much of the San Francisco coinage of this period was sent to the Philippines when the U.S. got involved with that country in 1898. In recent years, hoards of XF and AU specimens (generally cleaned) have shown up on the West Coast and these three dates are among the most common high grade Barbers in the Long Beach, California shows. However, mint state coins of these dates are truly scarce.

The recent introduction of “slabs” by PCGS, NGC and other grading services offer a lot of promise to the Barber enthusiast. These two services are computerized and identify each coin they encapsulate. Every month they issue a “population report” by date and mint state grade. While still early, these reports provide a direct estimate of relative scarcity in mint state. There have already been a few surprises. It remains to be seen if they will hold up. With time, most mint state specimens will come out of collections and we shall know exactly which Barbers are scarce in high grade.

This is an exciting time to be interested in Barbers. Though we have seen almost 200 years of U.S. coinage, with Barbers we are starting on the ground floor.

Dave Lawrence has been collecting Barbers since 1953. In 1979, he began a mail order business specializing in the series. His first in a trilogy of Barber works dedicated exclusively to the entire Barber series is due out later this year and will cover Barber Quarters. Copies will be available through the BCCS at a member discount.

QUESTION & ANSWER COLUMN

Questions on Barber coinage should be submitted directly to the Publisher, BCCS, P. O. Box 5353, Akron, OH 44313. The Publisher will attempt to get answers from specialists on all questions. Some answers may take time to find and they will be printed in future issues. Those submitting questions will not be identified.

Questions for the first issue come from the many letters received in response to the formation of the Society.

Q. I have 4 Barber coins where the image of Liberty appears on the reverse to the right of the E in "DIME." Have you heard or seen a Barber dime like that?

A. It is most likely a strong die clash or some sort of brockage. Die clashes occur when the dies come together without a planchet in the coin chamber causing the reverse and obverse dies to make impressions on each other. A brockage occurs when a coin that is just struck isn't ejected, but instead remains in the coining chamber when the next planchet enters, thereby creating an impression from the actual die on one side and one on the other from the coin that failed to be released. It's impossible to tell exactly what caused the impression on your coins without examination by a specialist. Coin World has such a service called Collectors' Clearinghouse.

Q. I have an 1895-s dime that looks like a double s. Is there such a variety?

A. In "Walter Breen's Complete Encyclopaedia of U.S. & Colonial Coins" the author identifies two double s varieties. One (#3494) has a normal date and double s; the other (#3495), has both a double 95 and s. Sometimes the mintmarks may appear doubled, but is actually "ejection doubling," caused by die tension during the process of ejecting the die. In the latter case, the mintmark appears more to have shifted than been punched over, as in the case of the double mintmark. 1895-s dimes caused this way are fairly common and do not command a premium.

Q. Will the Barber Coin Collectors Society include articles about Liberty Nickels which were also made by Charles Barber?

A. There is an American Nickel Collectors Association that publishes *Nickel News*. They include Liberty (or "V") nickels in their newsletters. The BCCS may from time to time include information on "V" nickels, but the primary focus will be on dimes, quarters, and halves to avoid duplication with the Nickel Club. For more information on the American Nickel Collectors Association, they can be reached at 7360 St. Andrews Road, Suite 163, Columbia, SC 29210.

BARBER KNOWLEDGE BAROMETER

Test your knowledge of Barbers. Answers appear on the bottom of page 9.

1. Which Barber dime date is famous for its "micro O" mint mark?
 2. Which mint is notorious for its weakly struck Barbers?
 3. What are the three big "keys" in the Barber Quarter series?
 4. Next to the 1894-s dime, which Barber coin has the lowest mintage?
 5. A full band on liberty is required before a Barber dime, quarter or half can be graded at what level?
 6. What year did the reverse die hubs change on Barber quarters?
 7. Which Barber denomination has the most varieties identified in Walter Breen's new encyclopaedia?
 8. What does the cap that Liberty wears on the obverse side of the coin symbolize?
 9. The reverse of the Barber dime is the same as the reverse of what other coin?
 10. Barber coins dated 1900-s are plentiful because many were hoarded in what foreign country?
-

How to Score Yourself

100% Super

90% Pretty Darn Good

80% Not Bad

70% or Less . . . Like a majority of us who
need more information written
on Barbers.

BARBER COINAGE LIBRARY

Many of our readers will be pleased to know that The American Numismatic Association has a library that contains many reference works on Barber coins. Barbara Stutzman, an ANA member, has compiled a bibliography printed below. These reference books are available to ANA members. ANA has a toll free number for membership information 1-800-367-9723. If you already are a member, you may borrow the books by calling (719) 632-2646 or writing ANA. There are, of course, articles of more recent vintage that appear in magazines from time to time. Our society will make its readers aware of such articles in the future, some of which have been listed as an addendum to the ANA Bibliography.

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Answers to "Barber Knowledge Barometer" Questions:

1) 1905 2) New Orleans 3) 1896-s, 1901-s, 1913-s 4) 1913-s Quarter 5) XF40
6) 1901 7) Dime 8) Freedom 9) Seated Liberty Dime 10) Philippines

DEALER BOURSE
ADVERTISING RATES

Beginning with the Summer, 1989 Issue, rates will be as follows:

	One Issue	Four Issue Contract
Quarter Page	\$25.00	\$ 80.00
Half Page	40.00	130.00
Full Page	70.00	240.00

Deadline for copy will be June 1, September 1, December 1 and March 1

To place advertising in the BCCS Journal
Contact: Publisher, BCCS Journal, P. O.
Box 5353, Akron, OH 44313

Advertising Policy

Any dealer or collector member in good standing of the Barber Coin Collector Society who is at least 18 years of age may place advertising in the Society's Journal. Minors under the age of 18 must first provide a "certificate of responsibility" from their parent or guardian before any advertising can be placed.

Only ads for Barber coins and associated supplies are permitted, although advertisers may provide generic descriptions of any other coins they sell. Mail bid advertising cannot be accepted.

The Publisher reserves the right to edit or decline advertising that is in conflict with BCCS bylaws. Unless otherwise specified in the ad, advertisers must accept the return of merchandise in the original holders that bears a postmark within 7 business days of the receipt by the customer. Any purchaser wanting to get an independent opinion of any coin must first notify the advertiser within the applicable time that the merchandise can be returned.

All advertisers must properly describe the condition of all coins advertised. Unless otherwise noted, the grading description of all coins will be in accordance with the "Official ANA Grading Standards for United States Coins."

The following Barber Dealers applaud the formation of a Barber Coin Collectors Society and have expressed their interest in supporting its members in any way they can:

Jack H. Beymer
367 Coddington Center
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
Jack Beymer
(707) 544-1621

David Lawrence Rare Coins
P. O. Box 64844
Virginia Beach, VA 23464
Dave Lawrence
(804) 467-0368

Curtis Iversen
P. O. Box 1221
Sioux City, IO 51102
Curtis Iversen
(712) 365-4514

Great Lakes Coin Company
P. O. Box 16036
Cleveland, OH 44116
Norm Talbert
(216) 356-0055

Daru Coins
6455 W. Archer Avenue
Chicago, IL 60638
Don Urchel
(312) 586-7666

J. J. Teaparty
51 Bromfield Street
Boston, MA 02108
Bruce Longyear
(617) 482-5701

Other Barber dealers are being contacted and will appear in future newsletters.

BARBER BARTER

The Barber Barter section is available as a service to any society member at no cost. Its purpose is for trading Barber coins only. In order to accommodate everyone's ads, ads must be limited to 50 words per issue.

Send ads to: Publisher, BCCS Journal, P. O. Box 5353, Akron, OH 44313.

Ads received by June 1 will appear in the next issue. Deadline for future issues will be September 1, December 1, and March 1.

Sample Ad: (This ad is fictitious and is for illustration only)

Need 98-o, 04-s & 13-p halves in strict VF to complete set. Have duplicates to trade. Send info on coins & I will send my duplicate list. Ed Smith, P. O. Box 341, Chicago, IL 60606.

MEMBER FEEDBACK FORM

1. What are your comments on the charter? _____

 2. What do you think of the first newsletter? _____

 3. Would you be willing to write an article for a future newsletter, and if so, what would your topic be? _____
 4. What topics would you like to see articles on? _____
 5. Other Comments? _____
- (Please Fill Out and Return With Membership application)

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Send the form below or copy the information on a separate sheet of paper and send along with your check or money order to: Membership, BCCS, P. O. Box 5353, Akron, OH 44313.

Join in 1989 and become a charter member.

Barber Coin Collectors Society Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Check the description that applies to you _____ Collector _____ Dealer

My collection interests: _____

My name and address may ___ may not ___ be made available to other club members.

Dues - \$8.00 per calendar year. Those who join during the year will receive all journals published for that year.

Signature _____

Date _____

Change of Address: To avoid unnecessary delays in receiving your Journal in a timely fashion, please allow 6 weeks for a change of address. Send all address changes to: Membership Address Changes, BCCS, P. O. Box 5353, Akron, OH 44313.

COMING OUT IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER:

- Articles on varieties, rarity factors, grading, patterns, and others.
- The first in Barber Barter and Dealer Ads.